

THE BIBLE AND CREATION

It is useful to draw together the chief witness of the Bible about creation. Jesus Christ, the second person of the holy Trinity, was present at creation, and while present among His creatures on earth, accepted the biblical accounts of creation as historical fact. In the question on marriage He asked, “*Have you not read that He who created them from the beginning made them male and female?*” (a reference to Gn 1:27). He added: “*That is why a man shall leave his father and mother and shall remain united with his wife, and the two shall be one flesh*” (a reference to Gn 2:24).

The Bible does not allow for a theory that teaches that all living creatures have evolved from some primary organism. Moses wrote, in Genesis 1:24-27 “And God said, ‘Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds: livestock, creatures that move along the ground, and wild animals, each according to its kind.’ And it was so. God made the wild animals according to their kinds, the livestock according to their kinds, and all the creatures that move along the ground according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good. Then God said, ‘Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.’ So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.”

Paul also wrote, in 1 Corinthians 15:39 “Not all flesh is the same. Human beings have one kind of flesh, animals have another, birds have another, and fish have still another.” That allows no descent of human beings from animal life, quite apart from the question of the image of God in man.

The Bible sets aside any suggestion that God needed long periods of time to help in the creation process. Psalm 33 says, “By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth...For He spoke, and it was done, He commanded, and it stood fast” (v.6, 9). Exodus 20:11 is also important in this connection. When God broke into the dialogues that Job was having, He asked Job, “Where were you when I laid the earth’s foundation? Tell me, if you understand” (Jb 38:4). We have simply to accept God’s account. He was there.

Paul’s important contrast between Adam and Christ. The whole of this becomes fairly pointless if it is seriously held that there was no historical Adam in both the creation and in the fall into sin. He wrote: “*Therefore, as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, so death also spread to all people, since all have sinned. For until the Law sin was in the world. But sin is not charged against anyone’s account when there is no Law. Yet death ruled from Adam to Moses, also over those who had not sinned in the same way as Adam did when he broke the command. (Adam was a type of Him who was to come.) But the free gift is not like the transgression. For if the many died as the result of the one man’s transgression, much more, God’s grace and the gracious gift of the One Man, Jesus Christ, have overflowed to the many. And the gift is not like what came through the one man who sinned. For the judgment came from one man and resulted in condemnation, but the free gift came from many transgressions, and resulted in justification. For if, by the transgression of the one man, death reigned through the one man, much more, those who have received God’s overflowing grace and His gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One Man, Jesus Christ*” (Rm 5:12-17). If anyone thinks that the idea of a non-historical Adam would have no serious effect on the Gospel, he ought to correct his views before they do him serious damage.

It is a truism to say that the Bible is not a scientific textbook. It is written in popular language. However, it does not present an outmoded, simplistic view of the universe. It does not teach that the earth was made as a flat piece, the four corners of which were supported by pillars going down through waters that were around it and under it. Even today we speak of “the four corners of the earth”, “sunrise”, “sunset”, “darkness coming on”, “death entering a person”, and “drought visiting the countryside.”

According to the rules of those who allege that the Bible teaches that the earth is a flat piece, it could just as well be said that Isaiah taught that the earth has a circular form when he wrote, “It is He (the Lord) who sits above the circle of the earth, and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers. It is He who stretches out the heavens like a curtain, and spreads them out like a tent to dwell in” (Isa 40:22). The Bible does not teach that the earth rests on pillars. Job said, “He stretches out the north over empty space; He hangs the earth on nothing” (Jb 26:7).

Inaccurate teaching about the creation very quickly leads to doubts about what the Bible says about the fall into sin. There is no clear line where even a liberal can say, “Here myth ends, and here factual narrative begins.” The *Formula of Concord* says, “We believe, teach, and confess that there is a distinction between man’s nature, not only as he was originally created by God, pure and holy, without sin, but also as we have it [that nature] now after the fall, namely between the nature itself, which even after the fall is and remains a creature of

God, and original sin, and that this distinction is as great as the distinction between a work of God and as work of the devil.” It also says, “For although in Adam and Eve the nature was originally created pure, good and holy, nevertheless sin did not enter their nature through the fall in the way fanatically taught by the Manicheans, as though Satan had created or made some evil substance and mingled it with their nature. But, since man, by seduction of Satan through the fall has lost his created hereditary righteousness according to God’s judgment and sentence, as a punishment, human nature... is so perverted and corrupted by this deprivation or deficiency, want, and injury, which has been caused by Satan, that at present the nature is transmitted, together with this defect and corruption, to all people, who are conceived and born in a natural way from father and mother.”

That fall into sin was a real fall, which involved our real first parents, Adam and Eve, in the real garden of Eden, and sin entered the world through the temptation of the real devil, in the form of a serpent. The chief curse of the evolutionary hypothesis is that it gives people an excuse to try to avoid taking full responsibility for the sin they have inherited in this way. They think they have an excuse for their own rebellion against God, which has led them to suppress their natural knowledge of God’s creation, and His eternal power and Godhead. They are, as Paul says, without excuse (Rm 1).